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OPERATIONS COORDINATING BOARD
Washington 25, D.C.

June 15, 1956

C O R R E C T E D

MEMORANDUM OF MEETING: Working Group - Committee on Broadcasting and
Television COBAT)

17th Meeting held 2 p.m. June 13, 1956
OCB Conference Room

Working Group Members Present:

USIA - Robert E. Button, Chairman
ICA - Gerald Winfield
Defense - Col. M. E. Williamson
State - Florence T. Dowling (alternate)
T. H. E. Nesbitt (Chairman, TPIB)
CIA - Member and alternate present
OCB - Ralph Busick
Marjorie Denny

Others Present:

USIA - Frederic O. Bundy
Robert Bauer
Daniel Lawler
State - Charles C. Finch
Francis Boardman

1. The minutes of the May 21st meeting were approved.

2. A telegram from Beirut on the subject of the Lebanese TV project was considered. A roundtable discussion brought out agreement on the following: the suggestion of presenting the educational TV station as an outright gift could not be considered at this time; the Ford Foundation contribution might be withdrawn if the project were commercial; in view of the fact that Turkey, Egypt and Iraq had adopted the 625 line European TV system, it might be more advantageous to the Lebanese to do likewise, rather than introduce the American 525 line system; it was most important for the U.S. to attain maximum influence on Beirut TV and the most probable way was to provide electronic training, guidance and assistance in presenting programs, and if possible, arrange for an American adviser; the mission should be requested to clarify apparent confusion between commercial and educational TV projects; the reply to the mission should stress the fact that U.S. interest could best be served by educational TV, but at the same time make clear that it does not want to hinder the commercial project; and the field should be requested to furnish the reaction of U.S. commercial representatives in the area.

A draft reply to Beirut will be considered at the next meeting.

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3. The Defense member distributed copies of a memorandum on the subject of "Broadcast Activity in Libya" and informed the Committee that the Department of Defense had approved utilization of technical services of military personnel based at Tripoli for purposes of a preliminary on-the-spot survey. USIA furnished the members with a technical study entitled "Proposed Radio Broadcasting Facilities for Libya", which contained technical details presented orally at a previous COBAT meeting. Discussion of this project was postponed until the next meeting when the members will have had an opportunity to study these papers.

4. Mr. Bauer, who had just returned from EBU meetings in Europe, reported on the present Eurovision set-up. His debriefing included historical background of EBU, personality of top officials, European sensitivities involved, general philosophy underlying all Eurovision programs, and delineation of problems. The principal difficulties were (1) technical ones involving interconnection equipment and (2) artists' rights and union problems.

The desirability of a technical survey of Eurovision facilities will be considered at the next meeting. The fact was brought out that this could be accomplished by a USIA technical official now scheduled to go to Munich on another mission in August. In view of this the Committee agreed that the COBAT paper dated April 26 requesting the OCB to approve a survey of European TV should now be withdrawn. (This paper, with a covering memorandum dated May 3rd was scheduled for the Board Assistants meeting June 22nd.)

5. The TPIB Chairman informed that the Technical Panel had recommended to the OCB that one of the shortwave megawatt transmitters now held in the custody of the GSA be released for purchase by RLN. With reference to the State Department paper for USIA on the adequacy of international broadcasting facilities, he reported this paper was being prepared and would be forthcoming within three to six weeks.

6. The Committee agreed to a discussion of the broadcasting situation in Saigon at the next meeting.

7. The next meeting of COBAT will be held Monday, June 18, 1956 at 2:00 P.M. at OCB. (Items 2, 3, 4 and 6 above will be on the agenda.)



Ralph R. Busick
Staff Representative

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